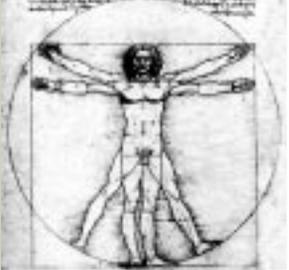


RENAISSANCE

*"Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is man."*

– Alexander Pope



THE MEDICAL MODEL:

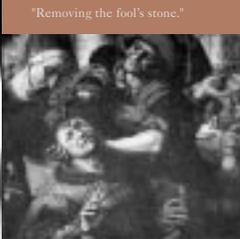
The medical model emerged around the 18th century, defining disability as any one of a series of biological deficiencies located in the body. No longer seen as the result of divine intervention, disability became a medical issue, requiring the services of trained professionals. Persons with disabilities assumed the on-going role of patients, needing to be cured.

By defining people by their disabilities rather than as full human beings, the medical model fosters dependence on professional care. Because of this forced dependence, and societal attitudes that view persons with disabilities as "pitiful," "child-like," or worse, over 65 percent of individuals with disabilities are unemployed. For many persons with disabilities — especially before the Independent Living Movement — the message was clear: overcome, rather than accept, your disability.

The Renaissance was an intellectual and cultural movement that began in Italy in the 1300s and spread throughout Northern Europe. It signified a revival of classical learning, art, and architecture — and the concept of the dignity of man.

While religion remained a powerful influence, people became less consumed with spiritual matters and more interested in the arts and sciences, leading to advancements in health care and to a better understanding of disability.

DISABILITY BECOMES A MEDICAL ISSUE REQUIRING THE SERVICES OF TRAINED PROFESSIONALS.



"Removing the fool's stone."

In 1402, St. Mary of Bethlehem, an asylum popularly known as "Bedlam," opened to receive mental patients in England. The institution itself was founded in 1247 as a priory. The famous painting of Bedlam (below left) is by William Hogarth, 1735.

This model of disability is not limited to one era of history. Many services and facilities for persons with disabilities are still based on this model, which views the person as broken and needing to be fixed. Only recently has a newer, cultural model of disability effectively challenged the power of the medical model.

Frontal lobotomies became more common in the 20th century as a means of permanently modifying behaviors.

STEREOTYPE:

Persons with disabilities as sick; viewed as those who need to be cured of a dread disease; referred to as patients; in need of professional care in a hospital setting.



1777
Arnoldi, a German pastor, believes education of the deaf should begin as early as four years.

1780s
Valentine Haüy develops embossed print and claims that blind persons can be taught.

1788
U.S. Constitution

1790
In Paris, Pinel unshackles people with mental illnesses.

1791
The US Bill of Rights is adopted.

1792
The French Revolution recognizes the innate dignity and worth of all human beings.

1797
Maryland Hospital in Baltimore City is established as "a hospital for the relief of indigent sick persons, and for the reception and care of lunatics."

1798
A system of marine hospitals is established to care for sailors who are sick or have become disabled.

1776
US Declaration of Independence.

1782-1840
Jean-Etienne Dominique Esquirol divides mental retardation into two levels: idiocy and imbecility.

1784
Abba Silvestri opens the first school for the Deaf in Italy.